

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The LNU Fire Management Plan's purpose is to identify the high value, high-risk areas within the six counties, and to provide the planning basis for reducing the damaging effects of wildfire. This is accomplished through a comprehensive approach designed to minimize the costs and losses due to wildfire by a variety of means, including response and evacuation planning, cooperative fuel reduction projects, fire prevention, and education.



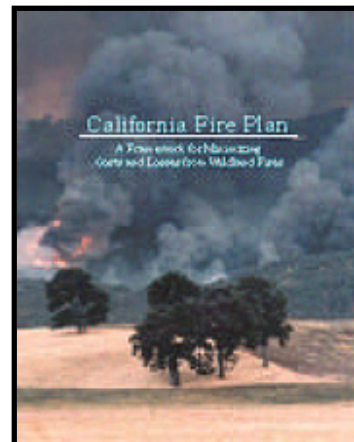
Photo 1: Values at Risk near Lake Berryessa

The Plan utilizes stakeholders' input and the best available Geographic Information System (GIS) data along with other data, to analyze fire hazards and assets at risk. These various analyses are then combined into a fire plan assessment. One purpose of this analysis is to identify the high value and high risks where the potential exists for costly and damaging wildfires. These areas can then be prioritized for the development of mitigating treatments designed to reduce

future costs and losses. The four basic components of this fire plan assessments are:

- Assets at Risk
- Vegetation Fuel Hazards
- Fire History and Frequency of Severe Fire Weather
- Ignition Workload Assessment and Management Prioritization

The overall goal of these assessments is to reduce the total costs and losses from wildland fire by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increasing initial attack fire suppression successes. To accomplish this goal, the framework laid out in the 1996 California Fire Plan guides is utilized. This framework forms the basis of an ongoing fire planning process to monitor and assess the Unit's wildland fire environment. It consists of five strategic components¹:



¹ "California Fire Plan" Executive Summary CDF Sacramento, March 1996.

1. **Wildland Protection Zones.** A key product of this fire plan is the development of enhanced wildlife safety and “Firewise” communities that reduce citizen and firefighter risks from future large wildfires.

2. **Initial Attack Success.** The fire plan attempts to assess the initial attack fire suppression successes and the Department’s ability to provide an equal level of protection to lands of similar vegetation type. This measurement is the percentage of fires that are successfully controlled before unacceptable costs are incurred. Knowledge of the level of service will help define the risk to wildfire damage faced by Public and private assets in the wildlands.



3. **Assets Protected.** The fire plan establishes a methodology for defining assets protected and their degree of risk from wildfire. The assets addressed in the plan are citizen and firefighter safety, watersheds and water, timber, wildlife and habitat (including rare and endangered species), unique areas (scenic, cultural, and historic), recreation, range, structures, and air quality. Stakeholders for each of the assets at risk are identified. The assessment will enable the Unit and other fire service managers to set priorities for prefire management project work.



4. **Pre-fire Management.** The plan facilitates development of a wide range of management prescriptions, utilizing every program and tool available to the Department, for protecting assets at risk. These tools include every conceivable combination of fuels reduction, ignition management, fire-safe engineering activities, code development and enforcement, public education, and forest health enhancements to protect Public and private assets.



5. **Fiscal Framework.** The State Board of Forestry and CDF are developing a fiscal framework for assessing and monitoring annual and long-term changes in California's wildland fire protection systems. State, local, and Federal wildland fire protection agencies, along with the private sector, have evolved into an interdependent system of pre-fire management and suppression forces. As a result, any changes related to budgeted levels of service of any of the entities directly affects the others and the overall services delivered to the Public. Monitoring system changes through this fiscal framework will allow the Board and CDF to address public policy issues that maximize the efficiency of local, state, and federal firefighting agencies.

The ongoing implementation of the Unit's Fire Management Plan is expected to enhance the wildland fire protection system in the following ways:

- Identify for local, state, and federal officials and for the Public those areas of concentrated assets and high risk.
- Allow CDF to create a more efficient fire protection system focused on meaningful solutions for identified problem areas.
- Give citizens an opportunity to identify public and private assets to design and carry out projects to protect those assets.
- Identify, before fires start, where cost effective pre-fire management investments can be made to reduce taxpayer costs and citizen losses from wildfire.
- Encourage an integrated intergovernmental approach to reducing costs and losses.
- Enable policy makers and the public to focus on what can be done to reduce future costs and losses from wildfires.
- Integrate elements of the Fire Management Plan into the land use and safety elements of the general plans of each of the Unit's six counties.